

BOOK REVIEW

JEAN ANDREWS. 1998. **The Pepper Lady's Pocket Pepper Primer.** (ISBN 0-292-70467-4, hbk.; 0-292-70483-6, pbk.). University of Texas Press, P.O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819, U.S.A. (Orders: <http://www.utexas.edu/utpress>, 512-471-4032). \$17.95, 184 pp, 94 full color photographs, b/w illustrated glossary, 5" × 8".

"This little book is intended to clarify some of the lingering confusion surrounding the pungent pods indigenous to Columbus' New World," says the author. The book may be diminutive but like the tiny Chilpequín, *Capsicum annum* var. *glabriusculum*, it packs a lot in its small size! This time, author/artist Jean Andrews shows us her equally adept skill as photographer in this slick and colorful handbook.

This is an excellent quick reference identification guide (as the title suggests—a 'pocket primer'). Chapters can be found on nomenclature, how to recognize domesticated species, what makes a pepper hot, discussions on color, aroma, flavor and nutritional value, how to select and store peppers, how to roast and rehydrate, and how to cultivate them.

Forty-five peppers are identified and discussed in the chapter simply titled: *The Peppers*. Each are listed alphabetical by common type/group name with scientific names given beside the common name. Each are described and a brilliant color photo (sometimes more than one) accompanies each description. The peppers are photographed to scale to show relative size to other peppers in the book. Additional information is consistent with uniform categories: SIZE, COLOR, FRUIT SHAPE, FLESH, PUNGENCY, SUBSTITUTES, OTHER NAMES, SOURCES, USES, AND REMARKS.

There is an extensive Illustrated Glossary showing simple line drawings of fruit shape at peduncle (stem) attachments, fruit shape at blossom end or apex, and fruit cross-section. An explanation of fruit group/types and a Pungency Rating/Heat Scale are also provided. Sources for locating both dried and fresh peppers, prepared products and seeds are included. In the back is a list of Seed Sources containing a few addresses and, of course, an index. Plus, Jean adds some personal remarks based on her years of study on the pungent spice of *Capsicum*.

So if you are looking for a slick handbook on peppers, look no further. Once again *Nuestra Señora de los Chiles* strikes again with a fine new creation. This book is designed for pepper lovers of all types, professional or not. *Brava, Señora Andrews!*—Linny Heagy, Linny/Designer, Illustrator, Arlington, TX, U.S.A., a0005835@airmail.net.